



**U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement**

# News Release

July 21, 2006

## **Employers in Arkansas, Kentucky and Ohio hit with criminal charges in connection with illegal alien employment schemes**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – As part of its enhanced efforts to combat illegal alien employment schemes through criminal prosecutions, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) today announced the results of three separate investigations that resulted in criminal charges against businesses employing illegal aliens in Kentucky, Ohio, and Arkansas.

Yesterday, two limited liability corporations in Kentucky pleaded guilty to criminal charges of harboring illegal aliens and money laundering in connection with an illegal employment scheme at hotels. They agreed to pay \$1.5 million cash in lieu of forfeiture and create internal compliance programs. Sentencing in the case is scheduled for October.

Meanwhile in Ohio, ICE agents arrested the owner of a restaurant on felony charges of harboring illegal aliens after 10 of his illegal workers were apprehended. In Arkansas, ICE agents arrested the owner of a construction business on felony charges and apprehended 27 of his illegal workers.

“ICE is taking an increasingly tough stance against egregious corporate violators that knowingly employ illegal aliens. Bringing criminal charges against these unscrupulous employers and targeting their ill-gotten gains is a tactic we are adopting nationwide,” said ICE Assistant Secretary Julie L. Myers. “This is a wholesale departure from the past system of sanctioning corporate violators with minor fines, which were rarely paid in a timely manner or at all.”

Already this fiscal year, ICE has arrested 445 individuals on criminal charges in worksite investigations and apprehended another 2,700 of their illegal workers on immigration violations. During all of fiscal year 2005, ICE arrested 176 individuals on criminal charges and another 1,116 illegal alien workers in these cases.

### **Kentucky companies plead guilty:**

Yesterday in London, Kentucky, Asha Ventures, LLC (successor in interest to Asha Enterprises, Inc.) and Narayan, LLC, each pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to harbor illegal aliens, one count of conspiracy to launder money and two counts of forfeiture. The companies were hiring illegal aliens to work at the Holiday Inn Express, the Days Inn Motel (Highway 192), the Days Inn Motel (Highway 80), the Sleep Inn and the Super 8 Motel located in London, Kentucky.

Asha Ventures, LLC, and Narayan, LLC are limited liability companies involved in the business of owning and operating hotels. Through their agents, the companies employed numerous illegal aliens at hotels in London. The aliens were sometimes paid by checks made payable to fictitious cleaning companies. The checks were then negotiated at the hotel upon whose account the check was drawn, and the aliens were then

paid in cash. These payments were designed to promote the harboring of illegal aliens and to disguise the nature, location, source, ownership, or the control of the proceeds.

There is a mandatory special assessment of \$400 per felony count, and the companies agreed to pay a total of \$1.5 million cash in lieu of forfeiture at the time of sentencing. The companies could also face fines up to \$500,000, or not more than twice the gross gain or twice the gross loss of their offense, whichever is greater.

The plea agreement also requires the companies to implement an effective compliance and ethics program to prevent the employment of illegal aliens in any of their hotels or other businesses. The plea agreement requires such programs to meet the approval of the United States Probation Office in consultation with ICE and include ongoing education of management on the employment and immigration laws of the United States. The corporations are scheduled to appear for sentencing in London, KY, on October 20, 2006.

**Ohio business owner charged:**

Yesterday, a Chinese restaurant owner in Fairfield, Ohio was criminally charged in U.S. District Court with encouraging or inducing aliens to illegally reside in the United States after an investigation by ICE agents. Jiang Fei Jiang, 36, a citizen of China is the owner and operator of Bee's Buffet in Fairfield, Ohio.

ICE special agents from the Cincinnati office, assisted by the Fairfield Police Department, executed federal search warrants at Jiang's residence and place of business on June 5 and arrested 10 individuals suspected of immigration law violations. In addition to Jiang, six other aliens were found to be illegally in the United States. The remaining individuals were found to either have cases on appeal or immigration benefits pending.

According to the criminal complaint filed in U.S. District Court, Southern District of Ohio, Jiang admitted to housing, transporting, and employing the individuals identified. Jiang faces a possible 10 years in prison.

**Arkansas business owner charged:**

Earlier this week, ICE agents arrested the manager and a crew leader of Arevalo Framing Associates in Springdale, Arkansas, on criminal charges. In addition, ICE agents apprehended 27 illegal alien workers of the company on administrative immigration violations.

Alejandro Arevalo, the manager of Arevalo Framing, was charged with harboring illegal aliens and re-entry after deportation. His crew leader, Rodrigo Arevalo, was charged with re-entry after deportation. The investigation has revealed that Arevalo Framing Associates earned some \$1.8 million last year using an illegal alien workforce.

Searches conducted during the investigation resulted in the seizure of four vehicles, \$1,943 in U.S. currency and an assault-type shotgun. Additional federal charges are expected in the case.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*